692 Lingam 1957). At each successive level in this process the headman will consider the decision of the previous lower-level hearings. Usually he will offer the same judgment, yet sometimes he may not only reverse the decision but also fine the headmen who have given a "wrong judgment". This right of the superior headmen is -- or, to be more accurate, was -- an important means of social control.

178 626 692 Until the end of the last century this system was functioning to the exclusion of the official Indian legal system, for no Badaga would risk the punishment of ostracism which could be expected for taking a case to a magistrate. A 19th Century Badaga proverb warned that, "If you take a complaint to a magistrate, it is as 681 if you had put poison in your adversary's food". During the decades that this was in common use, there was a rigid set of punishments merited by specific crimes; and this was said to have replaced an earlier system of lex talionis in pre-British (682) days. The Badagas would hang a man whom they had themselves found guilty of (688) murder (unless the British officials heard about the case in time); for certain other severe crimes, including conversion to Christianity, ostracism or banishment was meted out. Apart from these punishments there were various demeaning and unproductive tasks that an offender might be ordered to perform; or his head might be shaved; or one of the standard fines could be levied. Among the Badagas of the 19th Century the only fines were in cattle, household items, foodstuffs, and coin to the value of Rs. 1/4, 1/2, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, and 48. No intermediate or higher sums were demanded at that time; but in the present century the rates have increased and once a fine of Rs. 5000 (about $1060 U.S.) was levied by a Badaga council in a very serious case. There are detailed regulations for the fixing and payment of fines.

648 The relationship between the communities of the plateau was not solely